

HISTORY

Broad Peak

Diary of a Liaison Officer.(1992)

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This is an unedited diary of a mountaineering liaison officer at Broad Peak 8024 meters in 1992

Broad Peak

Diary of a Liaison Officer, A diary was written by a captain whose name i have not been able to find but apparently he was age twenty six and , he wrote his account almost twenty one years ago in 1992, he was liaison officer with a Chilean all male mountaineering team for 8024 feet high Broad Peak. Here is an account of that , I have changed nothing from the original manuscript which i found from a porter at K-2 Motel at Skardu in 2012 apart from few edits to make it readable and to bring it in a sequence, moreover I have added now few additional data to make it comprehensible. There are few explicit words which i have kept intact. .

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Preface .

Liaison Officer {LO} is normally a young officer with 3-6 years of service who is attached with foreign military mountaineering expeditions that visits Pakistan every year their number can vary between 40-60 teams. The reason behind this LO is many folds, primarily to facilitate the expedition, to give mountaineering

experience to the officer and on top to keep an eye on the team, lest they take pictures or indulge in espionage. All this dates back to early fifties and cold war era, and then in early eighties the war erupted in Siachen the heart of mountains thus it became a necessity's

I first heard about Liaison Officer popularly known as LO, in 1986 when my dear friend and cousin Captain Salik Nawaz Cheema went as a LO with an Italian team and later he had many tales to tell apart from a very charming and complete mountaineering kit. Salik and myself later went for special services group {SSG} training also but i failed to complete the course and he did, he later died as hero at Siachen in 1987, he was awarded with Sitara –i- Jurat posthumously.

Every LO has to be provided with a kit by the team and measurement for this are send to team well in advance. I had given my name rather volunteer few weeks before my marriage, my wife to be Captain Doctor Samina was not happy and by this time i knew that nothing can make her happy which involves myself getting away from her, myself on the other hand love her but still wanted to roam freely and this is what was making delay in the marriage. Finally she agreed but soon after marriage simply went back from her earlier promise of letting me free for few hours every day. My

issue was listening of Pink Floyd while being stoned and that was core issue. Thus when my name came for the expedition i look upwards and thank almighty for this timely rescue.

There was a two week training at ASMW&PT { Army School of Mountain Warfare and Physical Training at Kakul ,I went from Peshawar where as my wife was at Mardan, rode on my bike a red colour Harley Davidson which I had recently bought from Major Shakeel in Karachi.I rode from Peshawar and then took the turn for Abbottabad ,it was a nostalgic ride as I was coming here after couple of years the last time I came here was in 1986 with Captain Amir Yaqub on his Honda 125 and it was damn cold on that night. This Harley Davidson had a 125 cc engine and was not a good one yet its name had a magic in it, this road was through the valley and weather was excellent and I stopped enroute at an isolated place and guess whom I meet ,none other than Major Amir Yaqub who was going to military academy in his car with his wife, what a coincidence{Brigadier Amir is due to retire this year 2013}. I reached the military school well after dark and dead tired as well .I had a room to myself and there were few other officers there as well for the same course, my own course mate Captain Javed 'Jeidi' was also there he was married. Why i am highlighting the word married is because i was recently married and felt as i have entered

a new dimension, where nothing as personal freedom or ego exist as such i was looking at all married persons with same insight. One feels like the difference between bachelor and married the way we feel about being human and non human.

The routine was tough and god one, mainly it was running and stamina building and there were also classes in mountaineering kit and ropes and knots, we also did crevise crossing and repelling, this was the first course of this nature to be conducted ,the reason was that many officers would volunteer but they were physically unfit to undergo the trek.

The other topic among the officers who were mainly young and had no previous interaction with any foreigners was around kit, team, money and women not necessarily in this order. There were tales of LO's and the team women who stayed behind in the base camp when all other members have gone up for climbing and certainly a majority look forward to these; me no exception.

I met my own course mates who were platoon commanders in the academy notably Ahmed Hayat from whom I borrowed a khaki trouser as well. I have always idolised Hayat in many ways , he is confidant in life and that is the major yardstick; in short he reflects everything which i would like to become. We were opponent in

boxing and i think the only defeat Hayat ever had in life was that, yet my late uncle Khalid remarked after glancing the picture in 1983 ‘ he looks like winner despite loosing’ , i think this explains everything. Anyway Hayat was also married but happily. Pasha another course mate who is a relegee of one term. He was very smart in the academy another person to look forward, he was bachelor. I always suspected Pasha to be a hasish smoker thus i was happy that i will have some from him but he said he had never smoked it.

My wife came from Mardan for few days when the course was about to finish ,it was a kind of honeymoon, I went I think on a borrowed car to pick her up from the city and had a guestroom as well courtesy of Javeed. We roamed on motorbike in the city having dinners and fun, I remember once I through the quilt on her and she shouted back and I replied ‘you are not going to die from this weight and she started laughing’. We both went Halfway to Muree on this Harley Davidson ,it was a romantic journey it rained and was cold and bike got malfunctioned while coming back, she left after few days and after the termination of course I rode back via Muree. I love my wife she was everything that a man can dream, now after twenty years i still maintain my opinion that she is the most fantastic and complete women i have come across in my life.

Generally in army nobody restricts in sending officers as LO but in aviation it is discouraged as it takes away a pilot for couple of months, thus he delayed departure till last, the team had arrived in Pakistan and he joined them after almost a fortnight

Day one- July 1992.

Well it was quite an excitement to meet the team, lot of fantasies may be I am going to meet the professionals, secondly the very idea that people have come here to climb was soothing. Went to Military Intelligence-4, it was after a long time that I went inside the General Headquarters, well nothing has changed that much. General Asif is around and that forced me to avoid main road, General Burki died yesterday so most of generals were out, MI-4 handled me well and then went to Inter Services Intelligence at Islamabad.

It was the first time that I went inside ISI, with whom lot of fairy tales are associated, it is quite different from other organisations, everyone looks like a suspected Kim Philby or Burgess, the presence of a camera in waiting room is enough to shake all wrong motions, went to meet Major Yousaf an unlike ISI officer {a good quality}had a thorough briefing about his

work either he was happy to be good listener or he was too good in his profession, tried to ring a girl but then for first time in my life I dropped it because I want to go with expedition.

Ministry of Tourism

It was return of prodigal son , five el Escobars waiting for me , 'Well no woman no cry' and on top only one speaks English, Malcolm, Chavez, Rambo, Cheeko and 5th I have not given any name. My first impression after two minutes was 'Mr Cheema you are in trouble they have not got any of my kit, they are poor, amateur and non serious type' but I cannot give that feeling any name. Shyness , pride in uniform or call to duty or excitement of going to Broad Peak that I did not took my due money and till now I am spending at my own but it is not a bad deal in my philosophy,30-40 days in mountains, rest ,adventure and hashish along with Pink Floyd. It seem everybody is sitting here only to make money out of them, the tour operator the cook who says he needs 7000 rupees to buy few utensils, well road is blocked near Skardu, I can earn 300 rupees per day but I want to go there who needs money if I don't remain alive, the stories are coming into my mind , I can go up the peak may be, but out of them if they go beyond Camp 2, I will be surprised, as for myself I have got

nothing to worry , seen enough of this world, it's painful all I want now is to go up , have good joint and listen to Pink Floyd ,trying to buy an organ maybe I can learn better at 20,000 feet. Only difference when I went last time to Siachen and now is that love has gone.

20th July 1992.

Karakorum Highway, was built between 1965-1979 through the three highest mountain ranges of the world, the Himalayas, Karakorum and Hindu Kush, since major portion of it runs through Karakorum ,that's why it was named as Karakorum Highway ,it joins Pakistan with China and is almost seven hundred mile long ,it has one casualty per every mile and was regarded as the eight wonder of the world, in any case it is high adventure to travel on it ,one passes close to Nangha Parbat as well. This is where our captain travelled from Rawalpindi.

0600 hours, had a nice sleep at present sitting next to River in **Bisham**¹, enjoying the nature and its

¹ Bisham, a small town on Karakorum Highway. Traffic is not allowed or preferred at night on KKH.

beauty ,weather looks to be pretty disturb ,its going to be rain.

Aryton Senna II, left Rawalpindi at 1400 hours, before journey smoked a joint and put on Bee Gees and thoroughly enjoyed own country 's beauty its too good, roads generally good, less traffic; by 2000 hours me and driver Gul had developed good repo listen to music and never before enjoyed Pink Floyd more than now, we were stoned and lone night in which driver pulled Gs, Toyota Hiace is too good, at times one gets scary also but its fun, the team enjoyed music but afraid of driving. I still remember Baloch Regiment Regimental Police in Abbottabad who got conscious of staring of expedition and very proudly blew whistle to traffic. Quite a lot of tourist here, motel is good upper floor is completely to foreigners; today's journey shall terminate either at Skardu or near it.

Met Captain Suhail Sarwar in Rawalpindi he is in ISI also had a good chat with Captain Rehan of own squadron, went to Marghalla to get joints and it has really helped a lot to enjoy nature and adventure plus music ,at times I get hard on and then my mind fantasizes, they wander around but confidence is shaky and this time I am without my mother's prayers, I am sure even now she must be praying for me now but it's sad that physically and mentally I am away and I am gonna do something about it while I am here.

21st July 1992

1035 hours. **Park Hotel Gilgit**, waiting for breakfast whose time is already over, sitting with Dario, Micheal and Hassan the cook , slept late after playing chess with Dario which I lost ,bad luck. Gilgit is more like a dry barren place, but one has to admire the beauty in complete context after 12 hours of driving through that hard area of Kohistan where there is no place to sit ,you find a place like Gilgit , one wonders at times to what is all this, Gilgit must be secluded from rest of the world before highway was completed and that must have been the right time to visit here , lot of trekkers around and in a sense they have lot of things common because they all have same approach to life.

Mountaineering is not a sport, I have realised yesterday neither its an adventure it's a complete philosophy of life, we have a common desire to run away from the hassles of world and to enjoy the peace tranquil of mountains; when those snow clad peaks were visible everybody was relaxed , its tragedy that I cannot communicate with them more frequently, thus the team either remained calm or just laugh.

Stop in the way to enjoy the best fresh fish in the world and cool flowing of water, since I was stoned so I could feel more closer to area, at times ahead of Chilas it felt as these mountains have faces, shapes, designs, you can imagine anything like a cub sitting on top or old woman's or kings and if you concentrate a little bit more one can also hear the voices coming from history or past. The fast flowing water of Indus has its own charm, making waves which can send a chill in spine but it seems water act as a boundary wall to protect that heaven which is over there , no human being or soul could be seen there but then it's the ultimate.

Mountaineer in a way are more interested in rolling back the years this journey was a journey into past with every mile we were travelling took us back into start of world and this desire will take us to Broad peak just to reach the top and to feel whats there on other side.

Gilgit

An extraordinary city when you think in terms of the long journey and here at its end one only gets a desire to move forward to see is there any other city like this. It is a true mountaineering city; all shops holds equipment to deal with mountaineers. Water of river

very cold, just had the joint and the then saw city with Pink Floyd on, I am at the edge of world I want to go more alone just me and nature and nothing else. Here mountains have charm where you can find peace, u wont be haunted by memories.

Many things have revealed for instance I was eating and when I saw Marco looking with strange eyes at Jhummar{mountaineering equipment used for climbing} and at 1100 hours Varo told me that Rambo has left D-rings and Jhummar in Chile.

Saw an American girl with Honda 1100 cc with all bags on trekking, ultimate; no it was the man, who was cycling through KKH, I think he was ultimate but most have many things in common

So far I have not been able to get out of the time lapse, it would be far better to stay without watch and with this I hereby close my watch, oh yes monetary evils of world to some extent are alive.

21st July. 1992.

1230 hours. Had a long sleep got up had shower and joint and now waiting for breakfast ,well slept at 0530, sat in lawn due to heat at night with a Belgian De Devardhze, it's like two strangers meeting in a far off place we talked of everything woman, sex, money, life, quite things like similar he is quite worried about his job. Met Qayyum, chap spends twenty years in Europe speaks fluent Spanish had an antique shop, a hut at the top where nothing is mechanical, quite gypsy also went to meet an English tour operator, had joint, talked of cricket and Karakorum enjoyed the whole night of a mountain town saw its evening at bridge half stoned and yes not without Pink Floyd waiting today for van to go to Skardu, when i get the van I move out.

1800 hours. Another evening in this mysterious town, its quite small, roam after twelve to Buddha figure ,one brain really stop working at this it was a wonderful place absolute peace these Gilgitti kids are very honest you find lot different people here from down country too.

Time Unknown may be Thursday, date?

On our way to Skardu waiting for van sitting in garden of park hotel trying to get a last kick for the way, last evening sit in garden Rambo/Marcio slept in tent and on which Micheal threw water at 0200 hours slept quiet well .

This mountaineering bond is quiet strong rather all those who come here to enjoy this nature are one they are tired and fed up of this materialistic world they have left the comfort to face these hardships and they become buddies quite fast

Dire Straits is a good singer quite lofty hits they blend well with environments I tried to listen him once in Peshawar in room but he did not hit me but here he is amazing.

There are three boys and one girl, what is there relationship is quite puzzling and when you want your brain to work a little bit it's good to thought of them, there are four vip rooms here but why even here class difference; it's not possible.

Skardu

Skardu is the last town before one sets off for the glaciers and mountains, it is located at an altitude of 5600 feet and is linked with the rest of world with a single road, which normally takes five to seven hours to reach Gilgit ,it has one airport but flights are subject to weather, electricity operates for few hours in the day and there is no cinema in the city and at that time even making a telephone call to down country was a problem. Skardu underwent a change in early eighties when

Pakistan and India both started having clash over the mountains and glaciers and thus army strength was increased and Skardu is the base camp for both military and civilians

Equipment has become a problem nothing new is available and its going to be very expensive after lunch we are going to Satparra Lake for equipment but still the charm of only going to base camp is too much to worry about equipment.

We are staying at Yuk and Yat Sarai quite unique as it has lavish tents separately, certainly one of the best in Pakistan, smoke joint and then we sat out side in sleeping bags watching stars and moon and talked of life. We all are same but Marcio is quite a gone case uncouth is proper word, Rambo is true Rambo he does not speak English, all the time looking for Malcolm to convey but quite helpful and the one responsible for all this equipment fiasco, Malcolm the translator is normal ,Dario the life, he is Checko always smiling making fun and happy he certainly has a glacier like complex like Claudio who most of the time is lost in other world the leader , but according to Malcolm has done nothing in this expedition. They require 30-40 porters which is quite expensive well lets see what next Hurrah, Rambo found someone talking Espanola.

Last Night

Sitting in Yut and Yak waiting for dinner shortly Pink Floyd is going on ,two couples sitting in right corner are playing nasty games quite funny and erotic ones. They are nothing but ruffian this is my latest conclusion about them, at dinning table ,immature and none a mountaineer ,they have come here but mountains have done nothing on them.

I am or will be travelling in 1992 with 1950 version equipment but well Edmund Hillary did Everest ,me on Broadpeak; its all quite romantic exactly as I had fascinated. I am very happy and relax no worries no botheration no money matters no heart burning or churning of blood at night, its very simple world which one has made very complicated there are is so much beauty over here, it's a wonder that world is so cruel down there, mountains star lit sky where you can see those constellations which you have seen in your childhood, which you always dream of watching in those concrete fucking materialistic mechanical bedrooms where you cannot even feel yourself, you shout in your sleep, I wonder how you sleep, is your conscious at rest; have you put it to test.

Mountains have that special charm where for first time you understand the meaning of home or coming home for mountaineers, this world is a workhorse where you work which you enjoy girl friends. wives, children, morals, ethics, codes, but his real home is a snow clad

mountains, in a valley surrounded by lofty mountains all around and few are wearing the white crown where at night to see these stars where you can listen to the voice of water flowing where you can feel your heart beat.

A busy day lot of romantic things to do like arranging porter, finding kit for myself , wandering around ,transport, meeting and saying hello to other expeditions in restaurant, the people have generally same topic. I have yet to hear a single word except K-2 on one table to hard climbs or Trango Towers on other, legends do occur here, like old pictures of Wanda in K-2 Motel, slowly we all are developing a bond, people here are most humble which I have not seen anywhere , kids with pink cheeks , old men with bend back; one feels like sitting next to them and to ask about other old years, even the people don't have other interest , shops are very rare to cater for anything else and its strange that these absences are not felt.

Having a candle lit dinner switched off all lights only four brass candle jars and Inti Allamini on air and I told the waiter to borrow ceremonial dress from the gatekeeper and served us the food, Espaniols are quite impressed and manager is seriously thinking of it having a permanent feature.

Next Day Time ?

Just solved the peculiar porter problem which sour the taste of ‘November Rain’ a good journey listen to Munni Begum after a long time also thought of events in case of my death, they were so sad that I change the frequency, but its not good that so many people depend on one man. Sitting in Dassu camping ground reading ‘Adrift’ a vagabond travel and feel like doing the same and I have to attend call of nature but waiting for task, fundamental lesson of trekking may be some day we all can live like animals.

It was wonderful to be at own, I finally being able to get away from team to be at my own ,met Robert McNamara ex secretary of state , there was a group of American, all over forty including Jim who climbed in 1977 Trango Towers and his pretty young wife, two oldies one slightly acceptable other beyond that or maybe I have not seen her with that eye, two granddames both doctors they are bit formal, or maybe this is how life goes on, when one of the granny opened her kit it was quite romantic, they all have come here to recall good all days, may be they are young at heart, all legends in there own time. Jim invited me at dinner which was taken with dim lights an ole Trango Towers story with inquisitive questions ,quite peculiar in their own way especially when one is having hard drinks.

I am really ‘knocking at heaven’s door’ sitting under a tree having joint , variety of cassettes and

nothing to do, porters sitting under shade ,enjoying cigarettes and narrating ole stories knowing the fact that hard days are ahead so enjoying this break, everything peaceful so peaceful so peaceful that its frightening , I am afraid , I don't belong to this world , I have been living in a world of maniacs, animals, robots, dead creatures; wham.

I feel like a free man, I am sitting in heaven.

Throughout the day saw innocent beauty, how can I forget Fatima a 12 year old girl but looks like three year old but whose hand are more rugged than anything I have seen, and such pure innocence that you simply cannot walk away , the kids are standing by road, an old man may be hundred years old or above sitting idle next to road, few huts which in first look you cannot distinguish between mountains, the chilly water which tastes I have never known such clarity, tried to be friendly with Fatima and her six month old brother.

We are one hour walk short of Ashkole I want to move tomorrow , Musa the porter sardar is standing , looking like Moses and I have simply forgotten that his father Hussain the old porter requested me to look after his boy please; sahib.

I did rock climbing and jogging today and it was good to hear from an oldie that you are in form boy and

LO then in a minute narrated the old history of portering of Sir Godwin Austin and his glacier, of old customs and traditions of area, the instantly make legends thanks to all those books of Peshawar library so LO is staying one hour short of Ashkole, because that group is staying here and LO has put his things under a tree with shirt off to show off his newly acquired suntan, his muscles and the white heart given by his wife, LO is not concerned about his colour, caste, race, money, he is in heaven, he is playing with brother of Fatima sitting next to old man handing over all his money to Fatima just to see that innocent smile, he puts his Vaseline tonic and rub into Fatima's hand because it's a crime to see a girl like Fatima without smile and money.

So far LO is going alright it , his fantasies coming true. Excuse me Musa has come and asked the LO to please take cover as he will get black and LO wants to have a discussion of philosophy with him on this. LO is now going to enjoy and he is quite conscious in his sub conscious of US group and Mrs Jim ,so full action.

LO is sitting at a place where even the hen is not afraid of human.

Jhole. 2030 hours

God help our LO lying in tent dead tired, his feet are sore his back aching in uncomfortable manner, LO started the day in his peculiar fashion, he again slept out to see the stars and listen to some erotic voices from nearby tent, throughout the day he was very active enchanting ole Mrs Lyla and what and what not, he enjoyed the scenery took bath in chashma made two joints listen to pink floyd in complete wilderness and in same state went to Biafo Glacier and due to his inbuilt quality of born leadership he guided the Americans into disaster and in the end he was dead tired. Did climbing and for the first time in his life he was at his own and got scared and had to walk for hours and hours to find his way up. LO saw an eagle flying high in wilderness plus a baaz earlier so far he has not been able to see an ibex.

Oh my god even breathing is painful but LO has not given up regular joints , quite an expedition on far bank and LO has to go across in a pulley, LO is quite amazed he can perform wonder if even a bird is there to see, LO shoes are quite tight, his ass dirty, his mind free and soul free ,this is abnormal for him he is quite used to fear and today 1130 hours of walk has taken many of his ideas back to floor, right now all he wants is sleep.

Porters are really amazing the way they tackle mountains and they are very helpful and friendly cook Hasan took extra care of me and I feel sorry for my imperialistic ego about him few days ago.

Today he gave short lecture to Americans on his philosophy of life, he was widely photographed but not invited for lunch which in LO opinion is masti of guide and as our LO is very proud he took off today he was fantasizing temple of doom with his autographed solar hat and stick which he often used to display his balance on stones bye LO my wishes are with you go to sleep.

Next day

Washing ass in glaciated water is hell, LO has forgotten the track, he is one thousand feet up than original track and he is lost in stones.

Two hours later. Met trekkers ,found mountaineering route going back, LO is probably one hour or two hour short of Paiju, he has come across a chasma{water spring} with Marco and Malcolm already sitting with their shoes off .

Reached Paiju, another Bulgarian expedition coming back true mountaineers ; with one women with a provocative smile, LO is happy after washing his feet now waiting for dinner, standing on a high rock with Trango Towers on left with snow capped mountains in back ground, in front El Condor type mountain , river crossing in front everything at peace, LO has understood this route march and why people come here.

Today.

LO crossed river in a bucket and he was the first one to get on as soon as he saw Claudio with movie camera , it was LO's pride at stake, LO is physically not fit but he is giving the impression that he enjoys going slow , a fact I testimony to that, but LO gets scared in lonely mountains but he still loves to be alone as he is now, he is enjoying nature , a bird an eagle often stops him for hours to do watching here sitting all alone in this stone he is relax , no pain which made quite difficult for him to get in morning but I have to admit LO has style he does not mingle much with 3rd world countries only G-7 group. LO is quite friendly with porters he thinks himself of modern day T.E. Lawrence and he does not let any moment go waste to impress G-7 group in which he is quite successful, LO enjoy Nusrat Fateh ali Khan qawalis enroute, well he is now scared but he does not let it show on porters and others, he wants to see an ibex but mere thought shivers his body plus snakes at places ,his heartbeat goes very fast just thinking of it.

At times LO thinks of his past but for moments he is not afraid of death only if a girl is there to see otherwise he wont put his step in river but in front of porters he is a born in water although in his heart there is no beat.

Today, don't know the date time or day.

On way to Urdukus after Paiju, last 24 hours were very interesting for LO, he enjoyed, first Malcolm vomited in the middle of night for hours due to which LO got out and slept in kitchen next to Bulgarian couple tent he was too tired to get early and see them off.

LO is behaving as he is the hermit of these areas, offering tea, cigarettes to all incomers, three Italians two British ,Italians were good , Agnelli and other coming back from K-2, LO gave them tips of travelling, on new techniques in squash ,of tourism in Thailand ,then came the Americans group, Bob and Arthur they invited LO to supper but LO said okay if I get time, talk with British, Jeff and Adrian, both smokers, on cricket, football , hooliganism, trekking in KK and Nepal, wild life of Sind desert, on origins of Pathan and Olaf Caroe, LO instantly asked them if they smoke pot, which they did and LO was really happy, at supper to US camp and there as way had a chat with Arthur 46, anaesthesiast in California whose wife is artist and LO was ocean of knowledge on Mozart and Beethoven ,said LO he does not like Bach[Arthur too did not like}and that LO and Arthur looked as if they are childhood friend and then it was different that he was guest on dinner , he talked and replied on Muslim fundamentalist, future of sub continent, the process of democracy ,US Republican Party, the emergence of EEC especially when Mcnamara

says I agree with it, it was LO's finest hour for his country.

Late at Night

I was entranced to see stars. Mrs Lyla 70 is quite unfit and Mrs Jim quite okay but Jim is nice guy and they have an ass hole of a guide, real pity and I also thought of Colonel Minhas my commanding officer. Just crossed Lilloka glacier it is beautiful and hears the sound of water, its scary too with small lakes in between, occasional falling of stones which makes you move faster and faster.

I tried to act smart by crossing the river instead of glacier but It was good for Lawrence of Baltistan, otherwise he would have been gone . Marco is limping next to me and no sign of Maolocm on glacier, Dario ,Rambo and Claudio all gone ahead, still 2 hour of walk left; got Zia Mohiuddin and Eagles to listen.

Urdukas. Evening,

A German expedition and our expedition are at top level of this paltaeu., lot of flies here quite a tough trek over glacier yes real ice , at one stage our LO started running due to his previous experience of glacier. Malcolm came very late and Musa observation is that Maloclm and Marcio 'Mutton' ,cannot climb up. It's a lovely place, sitting on a high stone facing towards

north , you can see cathedral close by and an open glacier coming down, our LO's shoulder skin is all off and is quite painful , he is enjoying Indian raags at this time, he is now quite tired, less smoking ,his main problem is to find a good listener to talk about things, tomorrow another trek till Gore. Today our LO has been writing the sayings of Pink Floyd with markers on way and he has made Pink quite famous and somehow it is always common bond with others to talk about Walls, oh yes yesterday LO had a nice sexy dream after along time in which he was working in porno movie.

These porters are very tough and yes this 2 hours never seemed to finish LO is keeping time with sixty minute cassettes but only they were over but also the cells, here on stone are finds names of old LO of fifties and sixties and seventies, quite amazing one but there is hardly any change brought by time.

2 hours short of Gore - 2. Our LO enjoys the scenery ,tea and glucose and rest, an easy trek over Baltoro ,our LO today was quite fast, saw Puma helicopter then Mashabrum, here you can see Broad Peak and G-4 peaks , quite wonderful, Malcolm and Rambo were behind, trek quite slippery, actually our LO due to Siachen experience is shit scared of glacier and crevices.

Gore-2, evening.

Getting first touch of cold air its quite cold plus mentally these mountains remind me of four years ago when I was having something to think about Samina, but now nothing and its quite terrible to live without any dream at all.

These Chilean are quite good in climbing saw them doing so in the evening its one of major difference they do everything by will where as we in army do everything just to pass by, secondly I do regret heavy smoking well gonna get cut it down, thought of Samina ,but not the same way as it was four years ago, but she is still the only one I love. I thought of CMH/MH Rawalpindi days and these thoughts make one more lonely to think what happened next, its not only her fault, mine too, but in end its just a shattered dream and I am one of those few lonely people who have are alive without dreams and it is one of the major driving force ,. I have shut off my mind to think anything, lets wait for the right time but a feeling is there , maybe I won't be able to live as there are no more the prayers of my mother which can rock these mountains and give warmth even in cold.

I came here to find peace and this I have to find it in myself I am sure even by now God is not going to

take care of me at times I feel like jumping, at Siachen I had a feeling of achievement comrades ,Samina. dreams, letters coming ,counting of days nothing like that here.

Base Camp - Broad Peak.

A very treacherous way from Concordia onwards , it looks just next door but took four hours over glaciated bridges met a German trekker and own soldiers in Concordia very similar to Siachin ; proud very proud ones.

Here at base camp are four expeditions one American, one Spanish another Spanish and fourth is our Chilean, USA and we are next door neighbours while others are fifteen minutes walk over glaciated rocks. Captains Aetezaz, Khalil and Ruhul Amin and Ali came over from K-2 base camp it was fun when 4-5 LO's sit together, general talk on kit. team ,women, routines etc quite fun it is , it's a good day. American and Spanish are at top of Broad Peak and expected to be over it by 2000 hours, Broad Peak is virgin this year but tonight scaled by no less than six mountaineers so quite fun, Ali and Khalil to their camp and its very well established plus leader is very jolly, he came down in morning from 7400 meters but happy that his one member has gone on top and that one was crying at top. Other members at

base camp, two did shaved and were smelling of Tabac , i had a joint and came back to my camp, took out my sleeping bag and lay down facing towards Chogolisa.

Night

I can ask myself thousand times to explain that feeling of night on base camp but words wont be enough, you are just lying with cold air blowing and pink floyd 'More' on air, Chogolisa the bride peak is the most beautiful peak I have ever seen, on my left is Broad Peak and on right is Mitre and Angel Peak, on my back is K-2 and you are sitting on a glacier covered on both sides by Godwin Austin glacier and far ahead you can see glaciers meeting and Bride Peak, so peaceful . First appears the moon in first phase, next to little K-2 and then the first stars of scorpion appears overhead Bridepeak and as you become aware of them you can see twins and than slowly night becomes apparent the moon , stars going down behind the little K-2 and one of those rare moments when you can keep on staring the moon and actually see it going down, by then stars become more bright but beauty of bride peak don't let you go away stretching from left to right and covering all the Concordia in an innocent way, accidentally you look back at K-2 and realise that in between K-2 and Angel Peak you can see the reddish of sun barely visible and then the brightness of Broadpeak at top, for minutes you judge which one is higher right or left ,then in complete peace,

you hear the water running under you and the cracking of crevices in far distance which makes you a little bit fright.

While looking at Pegasus over Broad Peak it takes time to realise that light is moving on top , sitting or lying here in sleeping bag I concentrates on that light and realise that these are mountaineers coming down from top, I don't think there is any other exciting moment like this ,that guy over there is hanging with his life, only light of his torch and beside god you are at your own. I kept on watching him, at times his light disappeared then re appeared then a second light comes from top for two or three minutes I watched this drama trying to get into the feelings of that guy. I was scared before this but after night i was comfortable, at night got sexy dreams.

Today till breakfast

Cannot think of better holidays only elmajeor{women} is missing, got up early saw K-2 , Angel Peak Broad Peak all under clouds, marvellous scenes fucked up my camera roll, did little exercise. Had a healthy breakfast, it's a sunny day , Dario and Claudio left for base camp one, Mario stay back; now lying in my tent enjoying Dire Straits and reading an erotic book out side its complete calm and peace.

Yesterday

Chantelle the French girl has climbed K-2 solo

Today

Chantelle has got stuck at camp 4,she has got frost bite, it's very sad to hear this, a model of human endurance, suffering the pains, two American guys have gone up to rescue her, what a scene, here nobody knows her but her feat has drawn people, yesterday K-2 base camp got small weather balloon from American camp ,three Russians have gone up to K-2, Dario and Claudio established camp one, they say it so quite difficult, all it requires is stamina and will power . Aitezaaz spend the day with me smoking and listening music outside, saw the beauty of K-2 under clouds, weather has changed with clouds hanging low, it's a rare scene to see K-2 summit in clouds and to think Chantelle is still up there

Morning

It has rained and snow but quite safe in tent all night the cracking of crevices were heard here everything is possible, you might be swept away in a crevice , in morning avalanches came down on Broad Peak, quite frightening. Last night moon was beautiful visible for a limited time, no trekking parties , I hope

they all are okay . Read la revista de sexo and masturbated many times, also listen to radio, Olympics and Sri Lanka radio {last time I heard it was in 70's} today Aetezaz and me plan to go to K-2 base camp for night stay , its cloudy and rain plus snow and windy , a bird is sitting on a stone now it has flown away, Claudio has changed his tent as water came through, my sleeping bag is torn ,Rambo cooked the food, quite good. Marccio is a dodger , last night they listen to Viva Chile Meridiea, a morale boosting speech but It wont help to go up ,this small glacier is our world , gave my down trouser to Hassan the cook, who is now quite friendly, apart from water and human none other, can also listen to birds and to see them fly. Espaniol camp leader has gone to Camp 4, Roberto;s Mexican's wife's tits have been notched by a porter accidentally. I do not recall the world which is downstairs in plains.

The only fear here is of death and I asked this question to Spanish ,how it feels to go up ? and they all have different logics but all unexplainable, that what moves them to go up and face certain death like Chantelle at K-2, but again we all have a strong bond at least what I have seen and feel over here, anybody will be ready to help other. Russians, Americans, French , New Zealanders, Espaniol Swedes, its heaven without women or may be with women one can restart all this world again. As for myself I need prayers of my mother

to survive over here like Siachen but only now I don't have dreams and fantasy to go up to summit.

Sun has come out listen to Dire Straits, Pink Floyd, Nusrat Fateh and Faiz. Could not see the stars well at it was very cold and cloudy. K-2 with all its legends and myth, oh yes there is no surviving woman who has been up to K-2, last was Wanda who died a month ago in Nepal.

Yesterday went to Concordia with Fida to pass the message for Constantin a Romanian mountaineer who has fallen and broken his ribs, for helicopter rescue , it was two hours going down and crossing those glaciers through water twice, but Top Gun music helped a lot to cross those dangerous glaciers where everything is possible . It took quiet long to pass the message ,way back took very long and at one stage lost temper and started hitting the stones and abusing them , by the time reached tent just felt down, had dinner in USA expedition camp, its fun to be treated equally and with respect; stopped there for quite long and listen to travellers talk, Mexico ,Ecuador etc, the four guys except Malcolm are up, Chantelle is okay, oh yes listen to cricket commentary ; Pakistan is 207 all out.

Today

Its snowing heavily very cold very romantic night is dreary because of crevice etc, I wonder about

people up there must be very tough, entertained two trekkers for hours one really longs for some one to talk doing nothing except masturbation and smoking and lying down reading book and watching snow falling with all white outside the tent , all alone here.

I am getting a severe ache up my back I am dying its cold I cannot see anything I want to shout I am not getting air in my lungs it looks as I am on a high ground with white all around.

Its snowing heavily for last cinco hours and all those naked glaciers are now covered under snow it's a blizzard all day in tent playing with cock, listening to cricket commentary which is quite fun when you have nothing to do, had fruit cocktails, now soup, I am feeling pity for team members up in this weather . Its all over Malcolm is stucked up in camp 2, where as in K-2 Base camp, Constantin with his frost bitten toes is lying. it seems this weather will not get over .

Night

Headache, frost ,snow, cricket commentary, all alone; very cold blizzard on way, I think I better piss out.

Next Morning

It has been snowing all night and my tent is under snow with heavy cold wind, everything is white ,snow came into my tent as I keep the shutter open ,well nothing to do except to get ready for breakfast and to take heavy clothes , a difficult task Malcolm is back from K-2 base camp but other four are still up and must be crazy up there, its glaring on snow you cannot see without glasses, my socks are now all wet but luckily I think I have another pair of socks also, I also intend doing to fix the tent ,to take off extra snow which I did by punching inside the tent , it looks as if we are going to be stuck around till sun comes out. It's raining with snow.

Since I am all alone so just talked to myself with mirror, its very funny making funny faces its high altitude effects.

It is a real challenge, man against nature, to survive ‘ now it all depends upon your determination to survive, to see the beauty all around. Visibility is 10-15 feet what a scene.

Night

Sky is now clear, complete peace.

Next Morning

Snow blizzard is on .

Yesterday, spend almost all day at American expedition talking laughing, Dr Scott is good so is everybody, talked on religion, politics, sports etc. Captain Aetezaz came; listen to cricket commentary which Pakistan won, somehow one gets a lot of pride when one's country wins, teased the British in sporting terms, Malcolm went to espaniol camp ,met Chantelle and Thor on their way back, Chantelle is quite pretty and the fact that she has face certain death a few days back ago adds regality. Constantin told me that she is quite famous in France and had spend four nights at Everest at 8000 meters alone. All day, it was blizzard ,Chilean are still up at camp one, talked to Dr Scott on how he became a mountaineer , had dinner with them, these guys like all others farts and belches openly which I don't like.

Listen to radio all night because otherwise I became scared, moon was out with scorpions , Broad Peak both glowing but in mid night weather again changed, right now it is very windy and maybe a clear day tomorrow. I might go to windy pass, I can hear the singing of a bird it is very amazing, other day Captain Haroon told me he saw a butterfly and on advance base camp there are three plants which every one avoids. Fida told me there is a dead body of a polish mountaineer 100 meters down in glaciers with boots on , scenery has

changed here snow everywhere, mountains glaciers and everything is clad in snow, yesterday all day long slides were coming down and even at night too. Lying alone reading a third class novel and listening to radio sometimes I think of life and wife but then I get both of these out of my mind no use at all, snow is rising all around my tent may be when I go for shit i will clear it dreadful thoughts. Later I clear it all, my sleeping bag has got a hole so feathers are coming out and I have fixed a paper there , I am thinking of a joint and listening to Zia Muhiuyddin cassette. Cook Hasan daily puts up a stupid question, ‘what for lunch ?’ and my reply is always ‘as you like Hassan’. Did brush today , I look like a savage person but a peaceful one, at times I want to recall past, Thailand, Karachi, Newyork, Rawalpindi , marriage but then I give up and maybe some other times, at times I want to dream of days coming ahead but too shattered to think of them let them come ahead ,some times I do think of childhood but may be for minutes, one gets to know life here, at times I think of going to Broadpeak and this is only consistent idea I get, to face death and feel it once again like Siachen. Going out to attend call of nature , its very windy and cold ,I have put up my shoes very tough indeed

Iqbal is the greatest poet of this world and Jinnah the greatest leader.

Change roll in Ricoh Camera but give up in Yashica, now going to have rice with tin vegetables ,cloudy but shinny, high altitude effects; no appetite. Book is getting better, saw my face in sunglasses; I don't recognise this guy, talked to him for some time. Quiet strange that our LO at times starts barking like a dog or a cat or he imitates person dying ; very strange phenomena.

Listening to India Radio, Kishore Kumar on air and they are rekindling old memories of which I am scared, like that one song in Queen restaurant in Sargodha linked with Samina of which I am trying to forget but its very painful because may be I still love her but don't want to live together as it is quite a responsibility and travellers want to be free absolute free no bond of any sort.

I have just bartered a few cans of food from Espaniol & American camp for cigarettes its all under hand, a big plot a Nnick Carter story , told Hassan to beg ,borrow or steal anything edibles which we don't have, only excitement here as it is complete peace, only one hour left to light now, again blizzard just saw a lone bird flying outward from my tent.

Yesterday{whole day}

Constantin and Scott gone in Lama Helicopter{Captain Rizwan and Major Jahanzeb} it was

quite a change to see a helicopter , a trekking group came with two very pretty girls, one with few zippers down but our LO is very strict he behaves just like gentleman, always expecting girls to make first move which they never did but I have to admit that due to LO;s conduct they do come or rather take first step, like when he was sunbathing on a rock all alone, half stoned with books and K-2 was making him mad, the girl do came to ask why are you so happy here and LO just needed opportunity, the philosophy of Gandhi ,Pink Floyd ,God all came out

In the evening he listen for hours to Mcneal the old aviator from Alaska then at night yes 13th of moon the LO made a joint took his sleeping bag and cassettes out in open and what he saw he will never be able to come out of that spell , he fall in love, bride peak he wept at the beauty of the area its peace he saw stars and planets just like...for first time in his life he came to know that few stars are close others are far, also he saw galaxy even stars revolving around others stars, the nine planets making a circle , he felt the earth movement, he was representative of his planet and he saw other planets for how long only he knows but weak cells compelled him to go inside the tent and to fell into fantasies the cold air moving around the tents flap , he masturbated{his problem}.

The Chileans have gone to camp-2 LO saw them getting up, Dario is okay but Marcio was short of breath{Mutton}

Today

Had breakfast all things out for sun as it's a sunny and bright day with my beloved bride in near distance I love you bride peak, no woman can match your beauty and grace, thinking of going to K-2 today for full moon with joints and music may stay there for night.

A butterfly can change your whole mind.

A frightening peace yes it is too peaceful to believe it, last night I saw two Chinese missiles going up they were not stars but man launched rockets one after other with a gap of 15 minutes, I thought may be WW3 has started but who cares.

Don't ask me this feeling I am in heaven yes heaven and world is beautiful, good is far stronger than evil. Many strange and sad happened since that stay of two nights at K-2 base camp.

On 14th August 1992, we celebrated Pakistan independence day, Adrian the Mexican climber with Ricardo were coming down from Camp 4 and four other climbers were at already Camp 4, I was at Spanish camp

with Captains Haroon, Ali and Amin when we got news that one climber Adrian has fallen down from ropes, people at base camp saw Adrian through telescope making last movements and then he died. On same day Valdimir tried to scale Broad Peak ,solo, without permission he went up till Camp 3 and back, Chilean have come back to base camp. I met Valadimir and told him that he can climb any mountain he feel like, i am responsible. Other LO's less Aitezaz objected but i over ruled them being senior. My reason was taht if a man wants to climb a mountain than it is crime to stop him, effects of Pink Floyd.

Russians have left the K-2 base camp, had Yuri and Captain Haroon for tea while they were going back.

On way to K-2 I was less scared as I was solo but still lost the way and Antonio the Spanish photographer then took me through such a route that had I been solo I would have cried aloud. He took me through the actual glacier over crevice and that is where I saw a dead body on my right in the glacier sitting rather frozen and I was so scared that could not see it again. It was the Polish mountaineer which Hasan had mentioned. Saw windy Pass, enjoyed two nights K-2 base camp with full moon music and hash. Enjoyed the company at Spanish camp where Rustam the cook is one of the most interesting feature he cannot be explained only enjoyed.

Yesterday me and cook Hassan had a commando action at USA camp which they have left , to have food which we had none and now I am distributing among all needy trekkers.

Most importantly myself and Claudio the expedition leader have gone different ways, I have already send the chit for Hushe La porters where as he wants to go back through the old route. Quite a trouble now what to do, well right now I am going for piss and it is raining quietly, then food and come back and lay in my bag although I was supposed to spend the night at Espaniol camp as they have women company there, and my/Aetezaz plan is at least to hear the voices from nearby tent lets hope that rain dies down to go. I want to explore the new path for going back and as such will not allow the leader to have communication with porters.

Two days later

I eventually went to Spanish base camp also gave a thorough lecture to leader Claudio on his shouting {all language problem}.

Right now it is a good break in weather after 36 hours of storm ,snow, cold, rain etc Espaniol have gone and we are really all alone now, only Mexican at K-2 camp, did nothing except to read the novel ‘Firm’ a good one listen to radio at night, play chess{I have won twice}see scenic beauty all mountains are now covered

with thick clouds, lot of slides are coming down thought of Samina but her temperament is quick but I still love her, she is the only thing which at times props into my otherwise empty and blank mind.

Day and night with espaniol was good to smoke a good amount of hash , to enjoy the Rustam's talk and I still laugh alone in my tent when I recall his talks and activities one of the charm which has gone now, I had an eye contact with Spanish woman I think I read something in her eyes all night but no use now. It had snowed very heavily on that night and morning , all night as long as we were awake we laughed and laughed on rustam sayings,It was fun. Weather was very cold saw the forming up of it with clouds forming up on tops Chogolisa etc

Now despite all the suspicions of a nasty weather the team is doing nothing except sleeping and eating we have food of Chilean, American, Spanish and Pakistan origin and lot of it, we are now waiting for the porters to come and on 20th August to go through Chogolisa, Spanish burnt a lot of their stuff before leaving its quite sad to see food burning, I plan to take all and give it in Skardu to army aviation I am now feeling like a beast no worry no work only a routine which now looks boring due to cold chilly weather I was planning to go to K-2 but now no.

Description of Russian Team members

Vladimir, the Russian team leader about forty years old captain of Russian mountaineering team , a fanatic who climbs mountains like kids, first Russian on top of K-2 and two days later went for a walk solo to broad peak till camp four, a fearless man.

Yuri, Russian doctor age thirty who is always smiling in his ill fitted uniform did nothing here except walking around and being scared of Vladimir.

Helene, Russian babushka always waiting for climbers to come down, interested in one of the American climbers.

Porters

Who are they, in fact an expedition which consist of six or seven members normally spends almost two months at base camp and these porters carry their equipment and other weight from last road head to the

base camp and then they are given a date to come back and they do come back on that date. Its virtually the only major source of income for the local people, thus the two valleys that leads to this Godwin Austin glacier area have economic rivalry and subsequently they are equally distributed among the various expeditions. Expeditions recommend them to the other expeditions and bond is so strong that it is beyond imagination. I interviewed one porter Hassan and here is his life sketch

Age 62 years, he lives in Satparra Lake village, he has been to Kundus, Shepic Kangri and has worked as high altitude porter till 7200 meters of K-2. He is illiterate and he believes if he is good than all other will be good to him, he has eight kids, five are boys and three are girls, he also has three brothers and three sisters and they solve all their problems among themselves and have never gone to any court or police station. On marriage ceremony he has to treat whole village for four days, the average age of girl getting married is sixteen and there is no dowry rather girl gets some jewellery from her parents. He has married three times and his daughter is younger than his grandson. and in this village I found lot of kids but very few grown up men{I wonder on their sexual cycle}

A porter is paid \$ 6 once and then \$ 4 daily. In my expedition I had forty porters and I paid them for six days food and five days working money. Just for

calculation the food for forty porters weighed three hundred kilograms, all this is in light of ministry of tourism directives, thus porters instead of getting food from the team gets money and they carry their own food. i paid these forty porters rupees six thousand for the kit and rupees forty thousand as wages excluding food and for eleven days food the amount was rupees 13,200.Each porter is supposed to be provided with 4.224 kilogram of atta .There is a sardar of porters who looks after their discipline and distribute weight among them, each porter carry 25 kilogram of weight and it is weighed daily.

Having said all this, they are the most splendid, reliable, trustworthy, and cheerful. people on this side of earth.

Cook

The most important person in the team, he is again a local but highly specialised in his field, in my team Hassan was the cook and he was a young man ,but in case of Spanish team the Rustam was an old hand. the cook generally buys all the stuff and utensils from Skardu and calculates how much fuel he requires ,we took five jerricans of furnace oil, which comes to 125 litres .Cook establishes kitchen and that kitchen remains the hub of all activity, all edibles which team has brought with them from their home and other which they have bought in Pakistan is placed here and its cook

responsibility to manage this. Generally the breakfast consist of cereal and powdered milk and lunch is not taken rather dinner is them made with pulses and soup is integral to it. since there is nothing fresh everything is tinned or pulses and rice thus this is where cooks mastery comes in and I can vouch that Rustam on the day when Spanish received their families made six or seven dishes all using same ingredients. Cook is paid quite reasonably and certain cooks are booked by teams well in advance.

Rustam was an energetic native cook in mid forties{ i was in mid twenties}, he was native, experienced old hand in mountain expeditions, wore bright colour coverall. We liasion officers were all raw. My {Chilean} and Capitan Itezaz {Spanish} expeditions camp were ten minutes trek from each other on Godwin Austin glacier. Naturally we both were spending time more with each other and this Rustam did not approved. Rustam had other quality, he was master in deception, he would cook the same food daily but on inquiry would smilingly give it a new name every dinner. Rustam had two wives and one day his brother in law who was a porter himself, walked by. He had a break, i offered him a cup of tea which Rustam did not like, anyway to cut a long story short, the porter complained of headache and that was the last thing which Rustam wanted to hear, he gave him aspirin and with his typical half smile said '

well yours will be gone in few hours but what about me.....

How An expedition Works

The way people desires to go to Mecca or Jerusalem in the same way a mountaineer always desired to come to this fabulous place where four of world's fourteen highest peaks are located next to each other. There are teams which are highly sponsored by companies for various reasons and they only sponsored those who have big names among them, the mountaineers like Chantelle , Messener, Wanda ,and then there are teams again highly sponsored for other reasons because they may set new precedents, then there private teams which consist of members who have paid for themselves and then there are like my Chilean team which was basically a university team sponsored by Alitalia and few others in Chile to promote mountaineering. Thus on their financial strength depends their way of working, teams have been employing over hundred porters, they have satellite telephones as the Swedes had in the K-2 base camp and reported directly to their television and then thee were Russians who simply had nothing. In any case they get the permission from Pakistan ministry of tourism for climbing a certain peak and pay the royalty and then get in touch with a

tour operator who books their hotel rooms in Rawalpindi and generally arranges transport as well apart from cook. Since Liaison Officer is an official requirement thus tour operator cannot do anything without him and you cannot make any prediction about a young officer ,he if he likes can waive off any thing but in majority of case he will go by the book and you cannot convince him of anything .

There is always a rift in majority of the cases between the LO and the team, for a starter the team most likely would have brought a wrong size kit for him which again is not their fault in majority of the cases as most likely they received the measurement too late or not at all, then LO is paid a certain amount which comes to almost \$10 a day and that is a good amount of money provided he then makes arrangement for his own food, money is meant for this purpose but with this comes an unseen dividing line between the team and the LO, this is an inherent flaw in money it creates this .

An expedition also deposit money for helicopter evacuation in case they required and this is done by Army Aviation Corps which has one squadron based in Skardu ,this is primarily meant to support the troops deployed in these mountains, In old days the message for evacuation was carried by hand from base camp by the cook to nearest village and now it is done through the wireless of army unit located on the glacier.

Ali Camp - Concordia Glacier.

Adios K-2,Broadpeak,Concordia and all that is legend and myth, sitting here at Ali camp walked four hours all glaciated, last night stayed at Concordia and saw K-2,Broadpeak in starlit night maybe for the last time, had good chat with trekking group went to army camp, gave them extra ration well there was quite a row between Hassan the cook and Ali the porter sardar{Anthony Quinn}over who to be sardar finally porters threatened and than begged Hassan not to be their sardar

Three American did climbed K-2{True/False} but two have been evacuated by lama helicopter yesterday, they helicopters had a circle over broad peak, Rustam and Aetezaz had a bit of adventure while coming as they forgot the way, I laughed a lot when I imagine Rustam's action. From here K-2 or Broad Peak are not visible only Chogolisa and Gasherbrum series are visible, it's a solid glacier may be the first one I have seen with lot of deadly crevices, this La is only three years old, the sardar wants to leave at 0400 and as I am quite weak in packing and unpacking so I have decided on little adventure, to sleep without tent and I am firm

that tomorrow I wont lag behind ,its better to stick with a porter and they are really amazing men, they jump across crevices with 25 kilogram load where even I hardly manage and all are not young but mix ,well yesterday saw telephone wire and a mule, quite new things the best sound I heard is the crushing of snow under shoes crunch crunch crunch, my fingernails are dead black with dirt, may be today Captain Ruhul Amin joins me lets hope.

I have a mix feeling on going back frankly no feeling at all rather I would love to have that same feeling which I had four years ago but I know it wont occur although I wish madly for that one, because that was feeling of love but life will not be stable once I get down but who cares now.Both sardar and cook are now taking extra care of me after yesterday's affair .

The Gondogoro La

I walked behind others and soon we got at the base of the pass and started climbing, there was hardly any need of having any crampons ,in the mid I got the first jolt when an avalanche came down and I realised that its not over yet, by another four hours I was at the top of the La, and even today I exactly remembers my feelings, I wanted to cry, I wanted to hit myself , I simply wished that some bone of mine to be broken so I

can stay here because as I looked down at the other side of the La , it was not snow neither there was any track, it was simply a sheer fall, a jagged rock which was at least two thousand to three thousand feet steep and I had to descend, there was no other way, the porters were expertly going down and soon I was the last one to start descending because there was no other option, I was able to hide my fear from the others and for next three hours which were the longest one, I had absolutely nothing in my mind, I simply forgot about any kind of music or philosophy and was concerned about my steps and grips and followed the steps of porters

As I reached the foot step I had a sigh of relief and pride in myself and after half an hour walk I saw a scene which till to date I remembers very vividly, there was one stone hut ,the first one which I had seen since we left the K-2 and inside were one man and one woman, both Europeans, it was fantastic and most isolated hut on this gods earth

We walked and walked and soon our steps touched the grass and by evening we were near a river, where there was another hut being run by a local and it had tea and few other edibles ,the hut had an array of post cards being sent from all over the world, we pitched there and spend the night

Next day we walked and soon hit the first habitat a village and from there we got few jeeps and started our journey for Skardu. In the jeep I met two one British couple the man was from Yorkshire and her friend was a nurse in Saudi Arabia and she was also from England, they educated me about Roger Water's 'Radio Kaos'. We camped at night at a green pasture and had the festive with the porters, I offered hash to the couple which they readily accepted

We reached Skardu safe and sound and made payments to porters and were duly informed that due to bad weather there are no flights and more importantly the Karakorum highway is blocked because there has been a slide and furthermore there has been some killing that has taken place and thus all night journeys are closed and there are no transport available

At night I was keen to meet Aetezaz thus I almost walked ten miles to park Hotel near airport, I think I got the some lift enroute.

Aetezaz was full of stories the most interesting was that he had screwed the old Spanish lady right in the middle of the trek and was doing the same for last two nights, and last night he locked his door and forgot the keys inside and had to walk back through the dicey slim outer path to reach back his room and entered through the window.

The Journey Back

After two days of waiting the team got impatient but more than them I was looking forward for a last adventure, the Spanish team had left by the aircraft which operated after a lapse of a week, there was one old bus available in the city and through Hassan I got that bus booked and convinced the team leader that this is our best way of getting down to plains, and in the process I met three Italians one was Paola the cute woman and than Lalo and third I have forgotten, they requested me to accommodate them on this bus and they are willing to pay the fare and how can I resist the company of such a beautiful woman ,thus we were now five Chileans ,three Italians and myself along with Hassan the cook, to make this adventure a bit more thrilling I decided to leave the Skardu at noon time which will thus make us travel at night on this treacherous mountain road, almost all less the driver were against this but in the end we started the journey , the bus was a small bus yet it was old and we all jumped through out the way.

After three hours of journey we were stopped by the police at a halt and informed that we cannot travel and must stay for another couple of hours, I knew it

beforehand that we will be stopped and had to wait for wee hours before we can commence our journey, thus in a picnic mood I stopped at the only local motel, in fact I was the only one in that picnic or thrill mood and had a roasted chicken which took ages to roast ,the team leader lost his temper but there was nothing he can do ,his mood came normal after having the chicken. To cut a long story short, we reached Rawalpindi next night and lodged in the same hotel which was called little Holiday Inn. Spanish team was also staying in this hotel and so did the Italians.

The Last Days

The very next morning at the breakfast table I met the Spanish team and looked at the Adi with a new look, it is different when you know a woman has screwed in the mountains and I fancy my chance, after all I did not wanted to miss the boat and I was also interested in the Italian girl Paola, whom and when and would it be possible , these were the big questions.

The Spanish requested that that they wanted to have a sight seeing of the city and I proposed that they can go with me to Peshawar and see that old city and

also have a look at my place and they agreed and we drove in a rented van, there were six or seven Spanish team members and I gave the front seat to Tonio and sat with Adi in the rear, the driver was a pathan himself and drove the van like all pathan drivers,fearlessly , recklessly and fast. Tonio reaction later were ‘ I felt like I am sitting in a James Bond movie’ .I had little conversation with Adi and she said she wants some hasish, which I was happy to hear and guided her not to take back to her country but can smoke as much as she wants in remaining two days which they had here in Pakistan.

Any way I took them straight to my one room quarter where my wife was living and she was back from office and was surprised and happy to see me and so was I, the team had a tour of the city and courtesy to that driver had wonderful time, the world has changed in these years, at that time there was no fear of any kind of attack or threat, we drove back at night to Rawalpindi.

Rambo was trying to get free with the Spanish leader daughter Christina and later after dinner ,the Adi said she wants to come to my room for smoking hasish, I requested the team member and I forgets who was my room mate to get himself adjusted in other room and he did but with a quizzing look.

Adi came and soon we had one fag and another and then she kissed me or I kissed her first ,I don't remember but that is how it happened and we spend the night together, next morning she went back to her room and then on last night same routine was applied and then on next morning she left with the team for Madrid and very next day my team also left for Chile via Italy and I think the Italians also left with them. Paola took me upstairs in lift and said thank you for everything and despite our mutual affection we could not even embrace each other for good bye.

That was the end of my sojourn as Liaison Officer, I stayed for few days in Rawalpindi and got American and Spanish visa ,why?, because I had decided in the mountains while sitting and staring at K-2 and contemplating on life and world , that I cannot live here and I should go to a country where no one knows me and I should know none and then start a new life and see how life goes on, that was the scarlet thread, and you will read more about it in next diary which deals with that episode.

Recollections.

After spending over six weeks with the foreign mountaineering expeditions my own view is that, no liaison officer to have the option of either having food

with the team or getting cash in dollars from them. It kills the true spirit of mountaineering when you get indulge in money, it creates distance between the team and the LO. I have seen and felt bad when all liaison officers were having meal separately normally after the team has taken it. They were unable to offer anything to anyone. I recall how Ruhul Amin on dinner took out a jar of pickles from somewhere under the table from a mass of jars , the Swedish girl ask him in very quizzing way ‘ why don’t you hide it and Amin answered “ the cook will eat it’; i after spending time in West could feel the bewilderment on her face. Kit is a delicate and very touchy issue, i had other reasons not to bothered about it but for young officers it was an grave issue. One of the LO refused to take his team forward for not bringing the crampons. A LO is an ambassador of his country.

Epilogue.

That is the end but luckily I found the captain’s diary of his later day tales. Did he met Christina and what happened at Madrid did he escaped from the drug smugglers of Stalingrad?.